

picturesque or moral sentiment in their hair —
 except only
 Michael But Hesiod has more of Michael
 about him,
 than of Michael's creator. This man, one
 feels, has him-
 self put his hand to the plough, like Burns
 and Clare;
 but not, like them, looked back towards
 other callings.
 His farmer's year has for its very beginning
 a roll of
 religious music, a line for which Marlowe
 would have
 given his ears, a peal of thunder beyond the
 compass of
 our tamer tongue.

When rise in Heaven the Atlantid Pleiades,
 A sacred service, for him, his labour
 remains always;
 rendered to that 'fair-crowned Demeter'
 who had not
 refused, so legend said, to give her divine
 body of old to
 lasion among the furrows of a thrice-
 ploughed field,
 and whose broken statue three thousand
 years later was
 still being used by the peasants of Eleusis, its
 magic virtue
 not yet wholly faded, to fertilise their
 midden.

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Take heed whenever you hear the crane's
 voice crying
 High in the cloudy heaven her yearly cry,
 Her warning of winter's rains and the time for
 ploughing,
 Piercing his heart, that has no ox to plough.

Already in that last line is it fanciful to see
 a regret that
 goes even deeper than mere fears of famine —
 the wretched-
 ness of the countryman who sees Nature,
 like a lost mis-
 tress, going her way without him; and

suffers in some dumb instinct like a caged migrant bird?¹⁶ Nothing is

¹⁶Here, indeed, a touch of nature suddenly unites the poor peasant Hesiod and the embittered aristocrat, Theognis of Megara, (6th century B.C.) when he too cries in exile: